

Minutes of the March 10, 2011 HP/FH Committee Meeting

Attendance

Present: Ellen Kosmer (EK); Claude Tellier (CT); Chris Hoffmann (CH); Nancy Gregg (NG), Chair; Walter Wolnik (WW).

Nate Malloy (NM) (Staff). Alisa Brewer (AB) (Select Board liaison).

M. J. Adams (MJ), Executive Director; George Ryan, Volunteer (Habitat for Humanity).

Actions:

Called to order at 9:10 am.

Approved minutes of February 3, 2011 meeting.

Unanimous.

Approved minutes of February 9, 2011 meeting.

Unanimous.

Write a memo to the Zoning Board of Appeals in support of comprehensive permit application for Olympia Oaks referencing points discussed at our March 10th meeting.

CH/EK, Unanimous.

Adjourned at 11:11 am.

Discussion:

Habitat Belchertown Road Project. MJ described the project on Route 9 (on a bus route). The lot was received from Doug Kohl, and Chuck Roberts from Kuhn Riddle has worked up a design. It was understood that a duplex could be permitted there, and a zero-lot-line concept (separate parcels as opposed to condominium) was explored. CPAC is being asked for \$40,000 for a single-family home, hoping to start framing in September. (Photovoltaic funding is available, but Federal Home Loan Bank funding is questionable and the fundraising climate is bad.) An information session was held in February, with another one to occur in May, to make the opportunity known. Sustainable income at a level up to 50% of Hampshire/Hampden County median income is required to be eligible, along with 250 hours of “sweat equity” from each adult in the household.

CT asked whether not doing a duplex came from neighborhood resistance or regulatory constraints (such as zero-lot-line not being allowed). NM clarified that duplexes are allowed by Special Permit in some zoning districts, and zero-lot-line if available frontage was twice required frontage. MJ spoke of the challenge of having Habitat volunteers work with a condominium association; monthly condominium fees can be a stretch for potential homeowners, and even figuring out how clearing snow from a common

driveway should be handled has turned out to be problematic on Stanley St. NG commented that family support is hard for volunteers to provide.

MJ said the CPAC request is for early framing (i.e., early construction), with additional requests to be made as costs become known.

Hawthorne. NM said a citizen petition is going to come to the Select Board regarding the Hawthorne public process. It's unclear whether the petition will come to the Select Board during public comment or as an agenda item, but AB thinks it unlikely that a new public process would be opened.

A website is being created that will have responses (a FAQ document) to questions received at the December forum and the November walk-around; so far, draft answers to questions recorded at the December joint meeting with the LSSE Commission have been prepared. The next and last joint meeting and public forum will be on March 23rd at the Bangs Center; previously gathered contact information will be used to help get the word out about the meeting. AB stated that a goal is to have the website live at least a week before then. Following the March forum, leisure services and housing committee meetings will meet and formulate recommendations to the Town Manager. Maps will be presented on March 23rd showing what concepts have so far been incorporated where on the property. AB will moderate the forum.

Affordable Housing Forum. The Housing Forum will take place on April 14th at 4, following a preparatory April 7th committee meeting. NM and NG will send out invitations. Bringing displays and handouts will be encouraged.

A panel, including Ann Perkins, Chris Riddle, Joanne Campbell and representatives from the Northampton and Easthampton Housing Partnerships will speak about completed projects. A half hour of panel presentations will be followed by a half hour of questions.

CT will try to obtain donated finger food and refreshments for 50 attendees.

Olympia Oaks. ZBA has just opened a hearing on the "friendly 40B" comprehensive permit application for Olympia Oaks; the next hearing will be on March 24th, and NM expects two or three hearings will be needed to get through the process. The ZBA is asking for comments from the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and other interested committees. The Housing Authority and Disability Access Advisory Committee have already submitted favorable letters. Being proposed are 9 units at 30%, 21 units at 50%, and 12 units at 60% of Areawide Median Income. AB reports that the Committee on Homelessness asks that units be at the Extremely Low Income level. Ultimately there will be review by the state Department of Housing and Community Development.

A motion was unanimously adopted to write a letter of support referencing points made during committee discussion including location, wide range of income eligibility, accessibility and visitability, history of Community Preservation Act support, design that fosters a sense of community (community house and garden and playground), and accessibility to conservation land.

Tasks:

CPAC, March 17 (public hearing at 6, public meeting at 7).

Joint meeting with LSSE, March 23 (public forum).

ZBA, March 24 (public hearing).

Prepare for Affordable Housing Forum, April 14.

Documents:

Architectural renderings - Habitat's Belchertown Road project

Next meetings:

April 7 at 9am, First Floor Meeting Room

Submitted By

Walter Wolnik